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STATINTL

FBI ACTION
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Letter from the Honorable J. Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated 27 September 1951.

Reference letter transmits information, furnished by the informant, purporting to represent statements made by a Soviet official stationed in Europe who, the informant believes, is an important official of the Soviet Ministry of State Security. This information ~~is in regard to~~ ^{deals with} a possible split in the Politburo caused by opposed desires for war and peace and with the possible development of a "collosal thing" which the informant believes to be some kind of ~~super~~ ^{super} weapon. The Bureau advises that the informant has provided reliable and valuable information in the past. It is difficult, however, to properly evaluate the information provided without more information in regard to the source and the subsource. Certain general comments, however, can be made.

For more than a decade an outward appearance of unanimity has been maintained in the Politburo and it is, therefore, impossible to evaluate the various rumors concerning alleged splits on matters of policy within this body. Although it is extremely unlikely, a well-developed difference of opinion could exist for some time even with Stalin on the side in numerical minority. This split, however, would ^{only} ~~not~~ continue pending final policy determination by Stalin. The Politburo is composed of individuals hand-picked by Stalin for both loyalty and ability. They owe their advancement to his favor alone and continue in office by his sufferance. The seemingly best reports on Politburo procedures indicate that a measure of discussion on any particular matter may occur; but once Stalin has spoken, the matter is decided.

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This decision determines the future party line and the ranks are once more closed. The history of the Communist party shows that cliques maintaining a difference of opinion are not tolerated.

G. Malenkov is undoubtedly the most important individual under Stalin on Communist Party organizational matters and perhaps internal affairs in general. However, Molotov apparently is Stalin's first lieutenant on matters of foreign policy. It is believed that in the event of Stalin's death, Molotov would be Stalin's titular successor, probably ruling through a triumvirate of himself, Malenkov and Beriya, and that no drastic change in policy would immediately result. It is unlikely that a change of mind on Malenkov's part would influence Stalin to the extent suggested in the report.

There are certain apparent contradictions in the information contained in the attached letter:

1. While the informant claims there was a two-thirds majority desiring war with the United States now, he adds that "The Soviets have not given up the idea of peace and if the Americans are earnest and the Soviets can believe the Americans, they still desire peace". Although the informant does not so state, this seeming contradiction might be somewhat lessened by the fact that the Politburo while desiring peace could possibly feel that there was a growing necessity for "preventive war".
2. It is stated that two-thirds of the Politburo are said to desire war now with the United States. Members of this group

"do not desire to cause trouble in Europe but are in favor of

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concentrating completely in the East, including India, Indochina, Indonesia, Malaya, the Philippines, and Burma". This would appear to be not a desire for "hot" war, but rather a continuation and extension of the present "cold" war. If the Politburo actually wished to embark on an all-out war, it would probably be necessary to move in Europe or intercede in the Korean war on an extensive overt basis. It should be obvious to the Politburo that an all-out war could not be confined to Asia.

3. It is further stated that "another one-third of the Politburo, headed by Stalin, believes that it would be better for the Communist world not to have war for twenty or twenty-five years". This may well be Stalin's idea, but again it should be pointed out that the alleged differences in the Politburo are not caused by a desire for war or peace, but rather by the desire of one faction to continue and extend the cold war and desire of the other faction to possible peace into a protracted period of relative quiet and non aggression.
4. It should be further noted that the supposed viewpoint of the conservative third of the Politburo is curious in content, i.e. "They believe that capitalism is dead" and further believe "that it would be better for the Communist world not to have war for twenty or twenty-five years". If capitalism is dead, why war even in twenty or twenty-five years?
5. Furthermore, the informant's warning that if the United States "keeps making trouble", Stalin will "consent to war" is particularly open to suspicion as a plant.

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new atomic weapon or possibly to the "hydrogen bomb". It sounds reminiscent of Hitler's "secret weapons". The Office of Scientific Intelligence, CIA, is unimpressed by this reference and knows of no such weapon in preparation within the USSR.